

Notes & Queries

The Journal welcomes responses to previously published articles, statements on Hawaiian and Pacific history, or queries for information that will assist research. The Journal reminds readers that opinions expressed here or elsewhere in its pages are the authors' and do not reflect those of the Editorial Board or the Hawaiian Historical Society.

UA MAU KE EA O KA 'AINA I KA PONO

(The life of the land is preserved in righteousness)

In February 1843, Lord George Paulet, Captain of the British Navy's frigate Carysfort, insisted that Kamehameha III sign a provisional deed of cession of his Kingdom to Paulet as representative of Queen Victoria. The King did so, but most reluctantly and only after informing Paulet that if the cession took place, the Hawaiian Monarchy would "take every possible means" to justify its conduct toward the British government and its citizens and would also use every means "to endeavor to get back the Islands."

At the formal ceremony of cession, at which the Hawaiian flag was lowered and the British raised in its place, Kamehameha III delivered a short speech:

Hear ye! I make known to you that I am in perplexity by reason of difficulties into which I have been brought without cause; therefore, I have given away the life of our land, hear ye! But my rule over you, my people, and your privileges, will continue, for I have hope that the life of the land will be restored when my conduct is justified.

For about five months the Islands were ruled by a commission appointed by Paulet whose acts became progressively more arbitrary. Then, in July, Rear Admiral Richard Thomas, Com-

mander of the Royal Navy's Pacific Squadron, and Paulet's superior, arrived in Honolulu. Acting on his own responsibility, but with better knowledge of the policy of the British government than Paulet had had, Thomas immediately proceeded to restore the independence of the Islands.

On July 31, at a formal ceremony, the Hawaiian flag was again raised. On this occasion, Thomas declared that he did not

. . . accept of the Provisional Cession of the Hawaiian Islands made on the 25th day of February, 1843; but that he considers His Majesty Kamehameha III the legitimate King of those Islands; and he assured his Majesty that the sentiments of his Sovereign towards him are those of unvarying friendship and esteem, that Her Majesty sincerely desires King Kamehameha to be treated as an INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN. . . .¹

At the thanksgiving service held that afternoon the King stated that, in accordance with the hope he had expressed at the time of the cession, the life of the land had been restored, and that henceforth the country would be governed according to the constitution and laws. The texts of the speeches have not survived, but the King is reputed to have used the expression, "*Ua mau ke ea o ka 'aina i ka pono*"—"The life of the land is preserved by righteousness." This later became the Territory of Hawai'i's motto.

The words used by the King in his speeches of February 25 and July 31, italicized above, are obviously of Biblical derivation. In Deuteronomy 9:4-6, Moses warns his people not to assume that they are to enter in upon possession of the land of the Canaanites because of their own righteousness ("Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people"), but because of the wickedness of the Canaanites and because of God's purpose to manifest His will through the Israelites. They are receiving the land through God's righteousness, not their own, and would be judged according to the manner in which they advanced in the path of that righteousness which was of God. The words "righteousness" and "land" and their use by the King seem, therefore, to stem from Deuteronomy.²

What of the phrases, "the life of our land" or "the life of the land," evidently used synonymously in the first speech and then used again in the second in connection with the concept that righteousness preserves, and indeed is, the life of the land? In Proverbs and elsewhere, we find these passages: "In the way of righteousness is life / And in the pathway thereof there is no death" (Pr. 12:28); "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life / And he that winneth souls is wise" (Pr. 11:30). For similar passages see also Pr. 21:21 and 11:4, and Ezek. 18:22.³

We also find the following in connection with the same concept: "Righteousness exalteth a nation / But sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr. 14:34); "Take away the wicked from before the king / And his throne shall be established in righteousness" (Pr. 25:5); "The righteous is delivered out of trouble / And the wicked cometh in his stead" (Pr. 11:8); and other passages of similar import, as in Pr. 11:10 and 11:31, and Isaiah 32:1.

The phrase of Kamehameha III's, "The life of the land is preserved by righteousness," seems, on this evidence, to have been framed by a person thoroughly familiar with the Bible, who most aptly conjoined word and concepts therein to express thanksgiving for God's righteousness which had preserved, or restored, the life of the land.

In view of the historical importance of Kamehameha's utterance and its deeply spiritual meaning, it seems appropriate that the preamble to Honolulu's city charter should make reference thereto:

In order to secure the benefits of an improved form of municipal self-government, and to advance in that righteousness which is the life of our land, we, the people of the City and County of Honolulu, do hereby adopt this CHARTER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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EDITORS' NOTES

- ¹ Information on the Paulet episode is from Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, 1778-1854, *Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu: U P of Hawaii, 1938) 213-21.
- ² It seems possible that the King may have felt or even meant to suggest to other readers of the Bible that God's righteousness had also brought the efforts of the "wicked" (Paulet and Alexander Simpson, who had helped to foment trouble) to naught.
- ³ The first complete translation of the Old and New Testaments from Hebrew and Greek respectively into Hawaiian came out in 1839. We do not know whether the King read the Bible in Hawaiian or English.
- ⁴ Prior to his death last year, Dr. Murphy asked Chieko Tachihata, Hawaiian Curator of Special Collections, Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i, to submit this Note for him. Dr. Murphy would have used the King James version of the Bible for reference.

ON KO'OLAU THE LEPER

Regarding Frances N. Frazier's "Forward" to "The True Story of Kaluaiko'olau, or Ko'olau the Leper," in the 1987 *Hawaiian Journal of History*, I wish to add information to the Jack London reference. We know that London, or Keaka Lakana as he was known in Hawaiian, exploited the story in "Koolau the Leper," one of six short stories collected together with "The Cruise of the 'Snark' " in *The House of Pride* (1912).

What may not be known is that Herbert Stolz, a Stanford University student, was on London's yacht when it sailed in Hawaiian waters from May 21 to October 7, 1907. He served as a crewman on the *Snark*. Stolz was the son of Deputy Sheriff Louis H. Stolz whom Ko'olau shot and killed in 1893.

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HAWAIIAN HISTORY SOURCES

Of interest to our readers and to researchers and historians on Polynesia and the Pacific is the 1989 publication, *Hawaiian History Sources in Languages Other than English Recommended for Translation*.

The report was prepared by the Pacific Translators Committee of the Hawaiian Historical Society. It contains full bibliographic information on sources in European languages (French, German, Russian, Swedish); Asian languages (Japanese, Asian settlers in Hawai'i); and the Hawaiian language. The last category is of particular interest in that the committee, chaired by Cynthia Timberlake, has recommended a translation program for the 70 or so Hawaiian language newspapers published between 1834 and 1905, an important resource for Hawaiian history.

Copies of the report may be found in the various archives and libraries in the State.

The Editors

